What to Wear

With so many companies business casual five days a week, we are often asked, "What should I wear for my interview"? The answer is not quite as clear as it used to be. Our recommendation is to try and get a sense of the industry or company that you're going to be meeting with. If the company is a more traditional "Fortune" company, we recommend business suits for both men and women, regardless if they are a business casual environment. You just can't go wrong wearing a navy or gray suit. If you know the company is business casual, you can show a little of your personality by choosing a more "flashy" tie or stylishly cut suit. If visiting with a financial services company, it's navy or gray all the way.

Sometimes you are in a difficult situation because you are casual at work and putting on a suit will be a dead giveaway that you have an interview. In those instances, you should ask your search professional to let the client know that you will be casually dressed or call the individual you'll be meeting with and let them know in advance that you won't be in a business suit. We have found that even if the company is not a business casual environment, they will not mind how you are dressed for your interviews, especially if they've been made aware of it in advance.

What does business casual mean? Slacks and a blazer for men, a pantsuit or slacks and a jacket for women. The 3-piece rule still works. You should have some kind of jacket to complete your look, even when casual. And one of the most important decisions you can make is to wear something you like and feel good in. That gives you a little boost of confidence that adds to a successful interview.

The dot-com companies create their own set of appropriate dress concerns. If everyone is wearing jeans, what should you wear? Again, you need to seek the advice of your search professional. We recommend, never wear jeans on your interview, they are always too casual. Business casual will always be appropriate. Sometimes a business suit in these environments can give the impression that you're more of a corporate person and perhaps you can't work effectively in their fast paced entrepreneurial environment. If you will be wearing a suit to these start-up companies, make sure you let them know that you're not as "buttoned up" as you appear. Some other things to think about because it's the little things that make an impression on people. Make sure your clothes are freshly pressed, shoes are shined, nails are manicured, and get a haircut if necessary. One last thing: Always get there on time!